

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 070

WEDNESDAY MARCH 10, 2004

www.saipantribune.com 50¢

I N S I D E

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Local

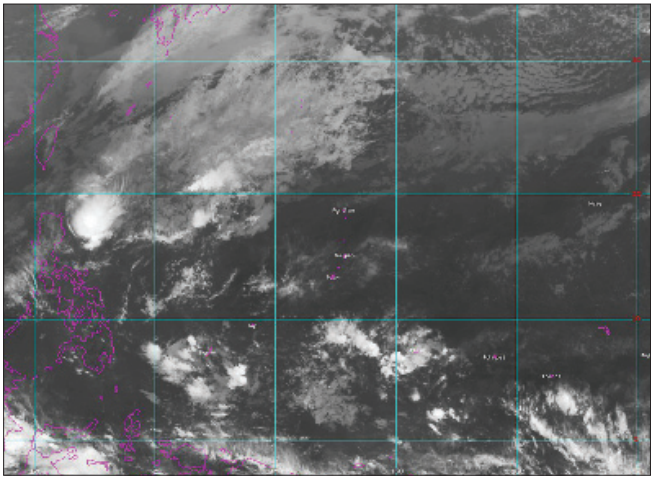


CARS UNLIMITED

CENTURY TRAVEL


COMMUNITY *Briefs*

WEATHER FORECAST




PICTURE TIME: 1:00 AM., MARCH 9, 2004
Western North Pacific between Equator and 25N from 130E to 180.


Fresh to strong trade winds across much of Micronesia converging into lighter winds near the Equator are producing scattered showers between the Equator and 8n from 130e to 153 and between the Equator and 6n from 160e to 180. A cold front stretches from 25n161e to 20n146e and continues as a shear line to 19n130e. Low- and mid-level clouds...light rain and showers associated this feature extend up to 200 miles north of the boundary. Trade wind convergence south of the cold front/shear line is producing low clouds and showers between 12n and 18n from 132e to 150e. This area includes the Mariana Islands.




SAIPAN AND TINIAN
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.




GUAM AND ROTA
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 mph. Highs near 87. Lows near 76.




PALAU
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.




POHNPEI
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15 kt.




YAP AND ULITHI
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.






















KOSRAE
Mostly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: East at 10-15 kt.



CHUUK
Partly cloudy with isolated showers.
Winds: Northeast at 15-20 kt.



MAJURO
Mostly cloudy with scattered showers.
Winds: East at 15-20 kt.

CITY	FORECAST	HIGH	LOW
 Auckland	Sunny	71F (22C)	60F (16C)
 Beijing	Sunny	65F (18C)	48F (9C)
 Hong Kong	Sunny	74F (23C)	61F (16C)
 Honolulu	Partly Cloudy	82F (28C)	68F (20C)
 London, England	Sunny	45F (7C)	30F (-1C)
 Los Angeles	Sunny	79F (26C)	59F (15C)
 Manila	Partly Cloudy	88F (31C)	73F (23C)
 Melbourne	Sunny	75F (24C)	59F (15C)
 Miami	Partly Cloudy	72F (22C)	54F (12C)
 New York City	Cloudy	40F (4C)	34F (1C)
 Osaka	Partly Cloudy	37F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Paris	Partly Cloudy	38F (3C)	25F (-4C)
 Pusan	Partly Cloudy	53F (12C)	39F (4C)
 Rome	Cloudy	49F (9C)	30F (-1C)
 Salem, Oregon	Partly Cloudy	60F (16C)	40F (4C)
 San Francisco	Sunny	68F (20C)	52F (11C)
 Seoul	Partly Cloudy	47F (8C)	35F (2C)
 Tokyo, Japan	Partly Cloudy	42F (6C)	36F (2C)
 Washington, DC	Cloudy	45F (7C)	34F (1C)

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Opinion

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XIV, Issue No. 134

Published daily at 2/F Century Insurance Building,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP, 96950

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AP The Associated Press

Pacific Islands News Association

EDITORIAL

Hooked

So, gasoline could be \$3 a gallon by the end of the summer. Gak! It's almost enough to make you hope that President Bush really does have a secret deal with the Saudis to turn on the oil spigots right before the election, as Bob Woodward reports.

Actually, it's not clear how much or how quickly it would help if OPEC boosted the supply of crude oil, since the pump price is also driven by a shortage of refineries in this country. Even so, it would be only a short-term fix. Good for Bush's re-election prospects, perhaps, but just a little kick of the can down the road to postpone facing up to the reality of cheap fuel.

It's running out. And the sooner we get serious about making the transition to something other than the carbon combustion engine, the easier that transition is going to be.

Most politicians won't acknowledge that because it's not what voters want to hear.

The Bush administration gives lip service to alternative fuels, such as hydrogen—as well as a token investment in research—but is proposing to drill, mine or tap every U.S. source of fossil fuel first. Hardly an approach that encourages private investment in alternatives.

Sen. John Kerry, Bush's likely Democratic opponent, has focused on criticizing the president's cozy relationship with the Saudis and calling on the administration to stop buying crude oil for the nation's strategic reserve supply—a short-sighted solution if ever there was one.

"We are hooked," says New Mexico Sen. Pete V. Domenici, "and we cannot even do the most incremental steps to begin to address this plight."

Sticker shock at the pumps might finally break through what Domenici calls the "psychological barrier" to action.

He, like Bush, favors more domestic drilling. There is also talk in Congress of reducing regulations to encourage the building of additional refineries. But a far wiser approach would be to reduce the thundering demand for oil, which is 5 percent higher in the United States this year than last, and growing in China.

The most encouraging development in that direction is the trend toward hybrid vehicles, which use electric power to supplement and reduce gasoline use. To his credit, Kerry is encouraging U.S. automakers to go more aggressively after that market, which promises a double reward to the U.S. economy in the form of jobs as well as more stable fuel prices.

But hybrids, too, are only an interim solution. Neither they, nor hydrogen cars in their initial incarnation, nor plant-based fuels such as ethanol (a big passion for lawmakers from corn states) can function without some reliance on fossil fuels.

A much higher priority must be placed on developing the technology to meet transportation and other energy needs with a whole lot less oil. Because someday, "scarce" may become "none at all."

(c) 2004, The Baltimore Sun



What good is leaving Iraq mess in UN's lap?

By **DENNIS C. JETT**
Special to Newsday

What a difference a year makes. Just over 12 months ago, President Bush swaggered across the flight deck of the Abraham Lincoln and declared victory in the battle of Iraq. The coalition forces seemed firmly in control. The Iraqi army was disbanded and members of Saddam Hussein's Baath Party were kicked out of the government. The American authorities began to map out the route to democracy without bothering to consult with any Iraqis besides a few favorite exiles.

Now things look decidedly different. Last month was the bloodiest one by far since the invasion began. The Marines have had to back off threatening to level Fallujah in retaliation for the mutilation of the four captured American contractors, and instead have turned the city over to an all-Iraqi force led by former Iraqi army officers.

And then came the shocking images of our treatment of prisoners at Abu Ghraib, the same prison that was notorious under Saddam's regime. Now it's become a disturbing symbol of America's occupation of Iraq.

It's a sign of the times that the Pentagon's favored candidate for Iraqi president, Ahmad Chalabi, has begun criticizing U.S. policy. Instead of fabricating intelligence for U.S. officials, as he did to provide an excuse for the war, he is said to be courting a new patron by providing sensitive information to Iran.

But here is an administration dominated by people with contempt for any international action that requires compromise, now trying to hand over the political future of Iraq to the United Nations. The continuing violence, the scheming self-promoters and a local government that is weak-to-nonexistent does not bode well for the chances that the United Nations will succeed where the Americans have not.

On June 30, the Coalition Provisional Authority—the name the American-led forces running the country have given themselves—will turn over sovereignty to an interim Iraqi government. The date is set and the ceremony will take place as scheduled because the American elections are driving the timetable—not the prospects for elections in Iraq. They won't happen before January at the earliest.

The June 30 event will transfer sovereignty without power to a government without legitimacy. It will consist of whomever the U.N. Special Envoy, Lakhdar Brahimi, can get to accept the job. He will decide by the end of this month who will be the interim president, prime minister and the two vice presidents. They will hold those jobs until the elections produce a transitional assembly, which will then decide on a constitution and put a permanent government in place by the end of 2005.

Whomever Brahimi names won't control Iraq's economy, security or political destiny. It is not clear who will be running Iraq's economy other than the American contractors that do now. The Pentagon is not planning on reducing troop numbers before the

permanent government takes office a year and a half from now. The State Department will have to make many of the political decisions, because an interim government without popular support or the power to make laws cannot.

In the longer term, Iraq's political future will depend on whether the United Nations can orchestrate successful elections. It is a multi-lateral organization staffed by international bureaucrats, not miracle workers. The United Nations does not do well in what the military would call a non permissive environment. It is rarely given the troops, resources and mandate necessary to impose peace, so anyone willing to use violence can disrupt and often prevent what the United Nations is trying to accomplish. The bombing of the U.N. offices in Baghdad last year, which prompted an evacuation of the staff who survived, is a case in point.

Normally, in helping countries after a conflict, the United Nations provides peacekeepers, assists economic reconstruction and guides a political process designed to result in a government with legitimacy. In the case of Iraq, the fact that it is only being given the last task does not mean chances for success will be better.

Because of its institutional limitations and the weak hand it usually has to play, the United Nations can really affect things only at the margin in a post-conflict situation. The real determinants of success or failure are the local actors, the country's resources and outside forces that might seek to influence the situation.

The local actors have to agree that elections are the route to forming a government that is accepted widely enough to be able to rule. Most important, the political leaders have to agree that they can lose an election that is nonetheless free and fair. The only thing that has united most Iraqis recently is their desire to see coalition troops leave. They will have to think of themselves as Iraqis first, and Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds second, long enough for elections to take place. And all three communities and their leaders will have to set aside past grievances and accept the outcome regardless of who comes out on top.

Washington asserts that mostly only a few foreign terrorists, criminals and remnants of Saddam's regime are carrying out the attacks on coalition forces rather than a more general, popular uprising. Even if that is the case, the attackers will have to be subdued by force, as they are unlikely to be impressed by the United Nations' new role. If the terrorists, criminals and remnants hide in urban areas, coalition forces will have to find them and eliminate them rather than reach an accommodation, as seems to be happening in Fallujah. Unless there are Iraqis willing to die for the good of the American occupation, any Iraqi force is unlikely to confront the insurgents and U.S. troops will have to do it.

Jett is dean of the International Center and director of the Transnational and Global Studies Center at the University of Florida and a State Department veteran.

By **FRANCES SABLAN**

The views expressed are strictly that of the author. Sablan is the coordinator for the Public School System's Advanced Development Institute.



Teacher Appreciation

Last week was Teacher Appreciation Week. It came and went with some giving full recognition, partial or none at all. Although it's after the designated official week, I'd like to recognize all the teachers in the Commonwealth, Marianas and all over the world. You made a difference in our lives, our children, youth, adults and elders.

Some of you are Teachers by profession, yet many are teachers of the heart and for life. You are so willing and eager to share your: Talents, Experiences And Caring Heart Every Round.

When I think of all my teachers, parents and colleagues, I am mindful of the following thoughts, characteristics and qualities:

Tough, tender touch, thoughtful, timely, trustworthy, trend setter, tester, time on task, test of time, tackler, thankful, tutor, thought provoking

Extraordinary, encouraging, exciting, experienced, eternal, equitable, easygoing, energized, eager, enthused

Angelic, adventurer, amazing, advisor, actor/actress, author, awesome, advance, alert, accelerated, all around

Caring, charming, clever, classic, classy, classroom manager, clear, concise, creative, cautious, chatter box, congratulatory remarks

Humble, honest, hands on, hard, hopeful, (giver of invisible) hugs, honored, heavenly, (has a lot of) heart, high fives

Exams, essays, explainer, excellence, explorer, expeditious, expert in his/her field

Real, respectful, rock, rugged, resourceful, risk taker, reader, researcher, reviewer, refuge, reliever, revered, responsible, reliable, reporter, refine, red roses, readiness, ridiculous & radical (at times), retriever, role model

These are but a few descriptors. There are much more beautiful and fine ones not mentioned. You are all those too (the positive aspects that is).

Happy Teacher's Appreciation Week all year round!

Productivity paradox

When the going gets tough, organizations typically do a knee-jerk reaction to cut cost without considering the long-term impact. Business owners have an economic responsibility to remain profitable, and one of their largest expenses is payroll. So to survive, top management may feel that it only makes sense to get the ax out and start trimming personnel costs through a reduction in force (RIF) or by cutting benefits.

A RIF is unpopular because it also creates morale problems and puts a heavier burden on the "lucky" souls left behind. For politicians, it is career suicide—especially prior to an election—and so it is discussed in theory but rarely seen in practice. That is why the infamous firing of 11 personnel by the enigmatic Ken Wright struck fear in the hearts of not only NMC staff and faculty, it sent a shock wave throughout the government community. Government employees questioned, maybe for the first time, that if this happened to their compatriots, could it or would it happen to them?

Organizational euthanasia is an attempt to fix a money crunch problem or boost productivity, and employers throw people overboard in a last ditch attempt to save their sinking institution. These efforts are shrouded in euphemistic terms such as "lay-offs," "downsizing," or "rightsizing" but they all mean the same thing: People lose their jobs.

Does it really help? Here are some things to consider before using this tactic:

- In a study conducted by the American Management Association, only 43 percent of 547 organizations that had downsized experienced an improvement in profitability.

- Another study revealed that 75 percent of downsized companies believed their performance did not improve, and another 67 percent reported no productivity increase.

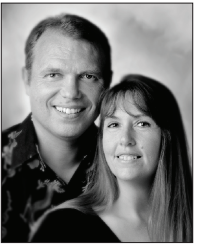
- An article in the Human Resource magazine by Kenneth P. DeMeuse, et al, stressed that firms that had large-scale layoffs did not show financial improvement. "Rather, their performance continues to decline following announcement and at a greater degree than firms that had no layoff announcements."

From these studies, and looking back at Wright's debacle and the situation he placed the college in before bailing out, one begs the question: Is a RIF the best answer? Desperate cost-cutting measures or a RIF can create what is called a "productivity paradox." Despite the initial cost savings, organizations appear to be no better off than before, and many times the situation is worse.

Even the term "reorganization" has become synonymous with

By **RIK and JANEL VILLEGAS**

Rik is a business instructor at NMC and Janel is the owner of Positively Outrageous Results. They have consulted with over 400 businesses in 40 different industries. For better business results go to BizResults.biz to read previous articles.



RIF, because companies that reorganize subsequently downsize and also experience the productivity paradox. Productivity plummets along with morale, and paranoia spreads among the remaining "survivors."

When an on-island bank was going through corporate "reengineering" several years ago, no one in the organization knew if his or her job was secure. We were friends with the local manager, and he was even paranoid about losing his job. Even though the angel of termination passed over his position, the low morale and the crass manner that headquarters had treated him and those in his charge eventually caused him to resign and work for another bank.

We are not saying that a RIF should not be considered, but that the psychological damage to individuals loyal to an organization must be weighed against the dollars saved from cutting costs. Feelings such as shock, fear, anger, and depression are not conducive for high productivity. Instead of thinking about the job, people spend their efforts talking about what's going to happen next, or looking for other work.

Like zombies, "survivors" tend to quit in spirit, but still show up to work in body to pick up their paycheck. Companies that are desperate to cut costs are operating at the "survival" level of human needs and will create a survival-type atmosphere within the organization.

Organizations would achieve greater results if they first sought to understand the needs of their team and then applied motivational methods that inspire champions. We tend to work harder for people than we do for money. One of the most powerful motivating factors is the confidence of those we serve and those who cheer for us. People are anxious to be part of a winning team and will exert great energy for the chance of a comeback. Create an atmosphere of winners instead of survivors. There is little difference in the effort between the two, but a substantial difference in the bottom line.

China's stand may prove unhealthy for Taiwan

By **DENNIS V. HICKEY**

Special to the Los Angeles Times

Once again, China is gearing up to block Taiwan's annual bid to rejoin the World Health Organization. For Taipei, the stakes are high. Taiwanese medical authorities are unable to gain access to vital medical information to fight infectious diseases, and, should the island suffer an outbreak of disease, Taiwan is ineligible for assistance because it is excluded from the WHO. As in the past, Beijing will advance a variety of arguments in an effort to justify this hostile behavior. But none will hold up under close examination.

China will argue that Taiwan cannot rejoin the United Nations' health agency because it is not a sovereign state and forfeited its seat in the WHO when it left the United Nations in 1971. By any accepted definition of the term, however, Taiwan is a state. It exercises predominate authority within its borders, possesses a relatively stable population that both holds elections and owes allegiance to the Taipei government, and maintains formal diplomatic relations with about 30 other countries and close unofficial links with many others.

Irrespective of this fact, however, one must remember that Taiwan is not even seeking to rejoin the WHO as a state. It is seeking to rejoin only as a "health entity" with "observer status." The Holy See, the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Sovereign Military Order of Malta and the International Committee of the Red Cross are among those with observer status. Moreover, Puerto Rico and Tokelau participate as "associate members."

China already has reluctantly agreed to Taiwan's participation in the World Trade Organization as a "customs territory." And although Beijing is pressuring the Office International des Epizooties, the world animal health organization, to downgrade Taiwan's membership to a "quarantine territory," it is not seeking Taiwan's ouster from the group.

So why can't Beijing acquiesce to Taiwan's participation in the WHO as a "health entity" with "observer status"?

When confronted with such facts, Chinese representatives generally shift gears and argue that Taiwan cannot participate in the WHO because it should seek medical assistance from "the central government" in Beijing in a medical emergency. But this argument ignores the fact that the present regime in Beijing has never exercised any control over Taiwan, has never written its laws or funded its government—and is not accepted by the people of Taiwan as having any authority within its borders. In fact, a growing number of Taiwanese—including some in the highest levels of the government—support the island's de jure separation from China.

Furthermore, it is unlikely that China is capable of offering medical assistance. When the SARS epidemic swept Asia in 2003, many Taiwanese saw in China's response the deplorable level of medical care there, and in a crisis would probably want no part of it. According to many accounts, medical care in China has deteriorated sharply over the last two decades and shows no sign of improvement.

Finally, China will suggest that there is no need for Taiwan to participate in the WHO because it already enjoys a high standard of public health and has enough access to health information. But this argument ignores the island's pressing need for medical assistance during national emergencies like the 1999 earthquake and the 2003 SARS epidemic. It also ignores the many health contributions that Taiwan could make to the international community.

Despite the fallacy of its arguments, China still will seek to block Taiwan's admission to the WHO. This represents only one part of its continuing campaign to strip Taiwan of any vestiges of statehood. But Beijing is worried. It knows that the time is fast approaching when the global community will no longer cave in to its pressure.

A growing number of countries—led by the United States—agree that it is in every nation's best interest to support Taiwan's application for observer status in the WHO and to help find ways for the island's voice to be heard in it.

Hickey is professor of political science and university fellow in research at Southwest Missouri State University.

By **MOHAMMAD ASHRAF, PH.D.**

Ashraf is an International Resource Economist. He is solely responsible for the views expressed in this column and doesn't represent the views of Saipan Tribune. His email address is ashmdr@hotmail.com



The CNMI's labor policy

Q Dear Dr. Ashraf, I read your Q & A column regularly and I find it very informative in regards to our social and economic issues. Would you please comment on our labor policy?

A Local control over immigration is one of the key elements of the Covenant the CNMI negotiated with the United States at the time of joining THE political family of this great nation. Crafters of the Covenant knew what development challenges the CNMI faces due to its isolated geographic location and small size. I believe this feature of the Covenant is quite significant to bridge the income, standard of living, and the overall level of development gap between people of the CNMI and rest of the nation expeditiously.

Questions have been and continue to loom as to how well the CNMI developed and implemented its labor policy to advance its development. A high level of unemployment among locals and allegations of labor abuses receiving national publicity cast doubts on the minds of people on the appropriateness of our labor policy.

The publicity of labor abuses, whether real or not, has severely tarnished the otherwise hospitable and accommodating image of the people of CNMI. At the peak of this bad publicity, traveling abroad enabled one to hear many negative comments and expressions contrary to the reality of the CNMI being a serene and hospitable tropical paradise. At the local scene, the question of unemployment of locals continues to haunt politicians and they are looking for answers desperately. One answer that keeps coming up is to raise minimum wages, which is highly controversial and debatable option. Anyhow, labor policy needs to be carefully reviewed or perhaps rewritten to advance our development in a socially desired manner.

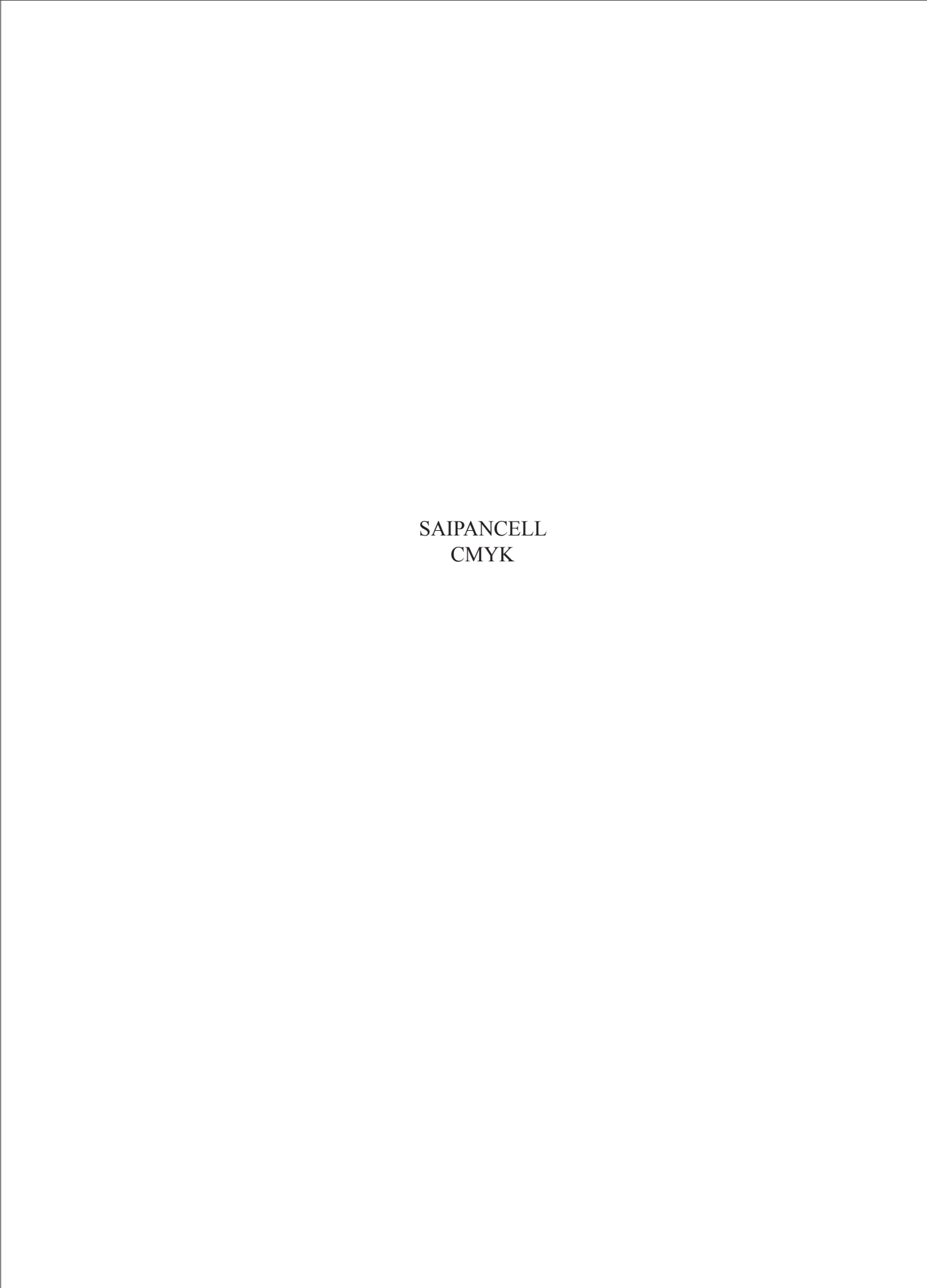
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

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START

From Page 1



Economic growth accelerating around globe

By LAURENCE FROST
AP BUSINESS WRITER

PARIS (AP)—Economic growth is accelerating in the major industrial nations but the performance gap between the United States and the 12-nation euro zone is widening, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development said in a report published Tuesday.

In its twice-yearly Economic Outlook, the Paris-based OECD raised its combined growth forecast for its 30 industrialized member countries to 3.4 percent from the 3 percent predicted in November.

U.S. growth was seen at 4.7 percent, up from the 4.2 percent earlier forecast. But

the OECD cut its euro-area growth prediction to 1.6 percent from 1.8 percent.

"In the United States, the economy has already been growing well above potential, and other English-speaking countries, which took part only marginally in the past slowdown, are cruising ahead," the report said.

"The recovery is still, to a large extent, bypassing Continental Europe, where domestic demand and household expenditure remain surprisingly weak."

Given weak consumer confidence and low inflationary pressures in the 12-member euro zone, the OECD said there "seems to be a case" for an interest rate cut by the European Central Bank.

Looking ahead, the report said growth could be more evenly shared, since "the world recovery has achieved enough of a momentum to start pulling European economies out of their domestic anemia."

But it warned the gap may not close if the United States fails to rein in its swelling public deficit or if further dollar depreciation does more harm to European exports.

For 2005, the report predicted 3.3 percent growth for the OECD area, up from the 3.1 percent earlier forecast. It lowered both its U.S. and euro-zone forecasts by 0.1 percent, to 3.7 percent and 2.4 percent respectively.

The organization also sharply raised its Japanese growth predictions to 3 percent this year

and 2.8 percent in 2005—up from the 1.8 previously forecast for both years and said that six years of declining consumer prices in Japan should end in 2005, halting a fall that has hurt growth in the world's second largest economy.

Despite its better-than-expected outlook, however, the OECD said Japan needs to forge ahead with vital structural changes—including a cleanup of banks' bad debt—if it hopes to beat deflation for good and ensure long-term economic growth.

"Basically, we see deflation coming to an end next year," said Randall Jones, a senior OECD economist.

Japanese consumer prices have been falling since 1998,

as the country tried to pull itself out of a slump that started with the bursting of a real-estate and stock market bubble in the early 1990s. Weak consumer demand and piles of bad debt together with falling land prices and scores of uncompetitive companies all combined to depress consumer prices.

Falling prices are welcome to some consumers, but they also drag down wages and make it more difficult for debtors to repay loans.

The economy has rebounded in recent years, however, amid surging exports to the United States and China. The OECD said it expects Japan's gross domestic product will grow 3.0 percent in 2004 and 2.8 percent in 2005.

IMF chief urges US to rein in deficit

WASHINGTON (AP)—Rodrigo Rato, the next head of the International Monetary Fund, said Tuesday the United States should use its current economic prosperity to gain control of its soaring budget deficits.

He predicted that any increases in interest rates by America's Federal Reserve would be moderate.

Rato signaled no change in IMF policy during his first Washington news conference since he was selected last week by the group's executive board to succeed Horst Koehler as managing director.

The former finance minister of Spain said he would formally take over as head of the 184-nation lending institution some time in early June. But before he officially takes over, Rato said he planned to attend a meeting of finance officials of the Group of Eight leading industrial countries and Russia, who are meeting in New York later this month.

In addition to lecturing the United States to use the current period of strong growth to begin dealing with the federal budget deficit, Rato urged countries in Europe and Asia to keep pushing ahead with their economic reform efforts.

"We are appreciating right now an upswing in the world economy in most of the member countries, but that doesn't mean we don't have some risks that we should follow and analyze," he said.

Asked about the slide in financial markets in the United States and other countries as investors grow nervous about the possibility of higher interest rates, Rato said he believed markets are overreacting.



Atkins Kroll Inc. and food vendors donate to the Guam Crime Stoppers. Below they present a check to the American Cancer Society.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



Atkins Kroll Inc. and food vendors donate to the Guam chapter of the American Red Cross. Below, they present a check to The Salvation Army.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



AK, food vendors donate to various groups

TAMUNING, Guam—Atkins Kroll Inc. and food vendors recently presented checks to the American Cancer Society, American Red Cross Guam Chapter, Guam Crime Stoppers, Make a Wish Foundation and the Salvation Army in support of their continued efforts and valuable assistance to the island of Guam.

The donations were based on 50 percent of the net proceeds of the food and drink concessions during the recent Beach Boys Concert.

"As AK celebrates 90 years of commitment of service to the community of Guam, we



are very proud to team up with Carl's Jr., Circle K, Domino's Pizza and Lone Star Steakhouse to extend our support to non-profit organizations whose objective is to provide assistance to our local community when needed," said AK president Robert Hernandez. "Their efforts to support our island's community is very important, valuable and greatly appreciated."

AK was established in 1914 and today is the leading automotive dealership on Guam carrying quality brands that include Toyota, Lexus, Chevrolet, and AC Delco.

Asia

Gunmen steal ballot boxes in Philippines



Manila’s public workers clean up election posters on a street Tuesday morning, May 11, 2004.

By JIM GOMEZ
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

MANILA, Philippines (AP)—President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo’s election foe claimed he was being cheated out of a victory, and police said Wednesday that gunmen attacked two northern town halls, killing a policeman and burning presidential ballots.

A nationwide survey projected that Arroyo earned 41 percent of the vote while movie star Fernando Poe Jr. earned 32 percent. But a “quick count” by an election watchdog group showed Poe leading early Wednesday by about 40 percent to 36 percent.

Poe’s camp has alleged widespread irregularities in Monday’s voting and he urged his backers to “remain firm in our belief in the truth that victory is ours.” About 3,000 supporters gathered in Manila’s financial district Tuesday night, singing, “FPJ, the hope of the nation.”

Poe outlined a list of alleged problems in Monday’s polling, including men in military uniforms opening boxes to burn ballots, vote-buying, harassment of voters and switching of ballots.

Arroyo praised what she called relatively orderly balloting but urged Filipinos to remain “vigilant until the last vote is counted.” The military warned against violence or mass protests and said it would use “necessary force” to maintain order.

Arroyo did not directly respond to polls showing her ahead. But

she appeared confident and said “the important thing now is we must leave behind the rancor that unfortunately characterized the campaign.”

Poe later said his supporters should head to precincts and “tightly guard the counting.”

“This government should not use money and intimidation against the people,” Poe told reporters, without taking questions.

About 3,000 Poe supporters gathered in downtown Manila Tuesday evening, singing, “FPJ, the hope of the nation.”

The official count is expected to take weeks as workers tally tens of millions of paper ballots by hand.

On southern Jolo island, a powerful bomb exploded Wednesday, killing at least one person and injuring 11 others near a building where election ballots were being counted, police said.

No one claimed immediate responsibility for the attack and it was not immediately clear whether the blast was related to the elections.

The al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf group is active in the predominantly Muslim island province, about 550 miles south of Manila.

On nearby Basilan island, unidentified men burned the municipal building in Tipo Tipo, the site of mayoral elections, military spokesman Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero said. No one was injured.

Filipinos voted Monday without any major disruption, but there have been at least 115

election-related deaths since December, compared with the 67 deaths during the 1998 presidential campaign.

About 15 armed men barged into the San Mariano town hall in the northern province of Isabela late Tuesday, gunning down one policeman and wounding another, national police spokesman Joel Goltiao said. The men snatched six ballot boxes, then burned the ballots and the elections office, Goltiao said.

About two hours later, 16 armed men entered a municipal

building in nearby Jones town, about 185 miles north of Manila, and burned returns, Goltiao said. There were no injuries.

It was not known whether the same group carried out the attacks, but most of the violence has been linked to local elections. Isabela—a mountainous, log-producing province rife with Marxist guerrillas—has a history of election-related violence.

The Philippine military warned Tuesday against violence or massive protests, saying troops would use “necessary

force” to maintain order if losing parties try to stir up trouble.

The opposing camps already accuse one another of planning to manipulate the outcome by fixing the vote or overturning it through violence and mass demonstrations.

The 113,000-strong Philippine military remains on high alert and “will not hesitate to implement its plan and employ the necessary force to maintain the tranquility and order,” military spokesman Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero told The Associated Press.

Poe said Tuesday he believed he had won but was being cheated, telling reporters that many people were unable to vote and urging his supporters to “tightly guard the counting.”

The election in this poor Southeast Asian nation of 84 million people ends the constitutionally fragile period following the January 2001 ouster of the last elected president, Joseph Estrada, for alleged massive corruption and misrule. Estrada is a former film star and a friend of Poe.

TRIBUNE GRAD

N. Korea, US face possible aid dispute

By JOE McDONALD
ASSOCIATED PRESS WRITER

BEIJING (AP)—Beginning low-level nuclear talks, envoys from the United States, North Korea and four other nations faced a possible dispute Wednesday over the North's demand for aid in exchange for freezing its weapons program.

North Korea says it wants the talks in the Chinese capital to focus on economic aid. It promised "patience and magnanimity," but warned of unspecified "very serious consequences" if Washington

presses its demand for the North to dismantle the program without discussing aid.

The "working level" meeting is meant to develop an agenda for a third round of high-level talks on the North's nuclear ambitions, which host Beijing says it hopes take place before July.

The U.S. State Department says its envoy, Joseph DeTrani, might hold a rare one-on-one meeting with North Korea's delegate during the talks at a Chinese government guesthouse. Also represented in the talks are Russia, Japan and South Korea.

U.S. officials say they expect the meeting to last several days, but no ending date has been set.

The United States and its allies say they were willing to provide aid if North Korea freezes its nuclear facilities and commits itself to permanently dismantling them.

North Korea has balked at making such a commitment, and insists on aid and a freeze taking place simultaneously.

In Seoul, South Korea's foreign minister said the talks will focus on two "key issues": making the Korean Peninsula

nuclear weapons-free and taking "corresponding measures" for a North Korean freeze.

"We hope that the countries involved in the talks will avoid confrontational attitudes and get down to deep and concrete talks on the key issues," said Foreign Minister Ban Ki-moon.

The dispute erupted in October 2002 when the United States said North Korea's isolated Stalinist regime admitted operating a secret nuclear program in violation of a 1994 agreement.

The North says it will give up the program only in exchange

for economic aid and a U.S. guarantee not to attack.

"The 'reward for freeze' should be taken up as a major agenda item at the working group meeting," Pyongyang said Tuesday in a statement carried by its state news agency.

"If the U.S. turns aside this and takes the meeting as an opportunity to insist on" a complete dismantling, "that will entail very serious consequences," the statement said.

Though it gave no details, the North says it is pushing ahead with developing a

"nuclear deterrent" needed to avert what it says is the possibility of a U.S. invasion.

The two governments are technically still at war since the 1950-53 Korean War, which ended without a peace treaty.

North Korea believes "there would be no need for it to sit with the U.S. at the negotiating table if the U.S. seeks to force the DPRK, not a defeated country, to accept its absurd demand, talking about 'irreversible and the like'," the statement said, referring to the country by the initials of its formal name.



GRAND MEETING

Tribal elders attend a jirga, or grand meeting, in Wana, the capital of Pakistan's tribal area of South Waziristan on Monday, May 10, 2004. A pro-Taliban, Pakistani militant leader accused of harboring al-Qaida men near the border with Afghanistan told tribal elders Monday that no "foreign militants" were hiding in areas under his control.

Taiwan opposition says recount reveals flaws

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwan's opposition said Tuesday that a recount of the disputed March presidential election has revealed some new problems—including ballots that were improperly stored or not certified by the voters.

But the ruling Democratic Progressive Party insisted that the errors were the result of careless election workers, not voting fraud.

"So far there are no signs that election officials have favored a certain party or rigged votes to favor a party," DPP official Chung Chia-pin told reporters.

The controversy over the March 20 vote began immediately after President Chen Shui-bian squeaked by with a 0.2 percent victory margin, or about 30,000 votes. He was re-elected one day after being lightly injured in a shooting, which is still unsolved.

Losing candidate Lien Chan has alleged that the vote was

marred by irregularities. He called for a recount of the 13 million votes and the president agreed to it.

On Tuesday, opposition official Chiang Lien-sheng said one precinct in southern Pingtung handed out only 744 ballots but recorded a total of 954 votes. Election official Wang Shu-pin acknowledged that a recording worker had made a mistake.

The opposition also said some ballots weren't properly marked by fingerprint impressions or personal stamps that people use to certify their vote.

The March vote was Taiwan's third direct presidential election, but it was the first time the island held such a vote together with an islandwide referendum. This apparently caused confusion.

Hundreds of presidential votes were improperly placed in sealed bags that were meant for referendum ballots, Opposition lawyer Tsai Yu-ling said.

S. Korea to announce impeachment verdict

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—South Korea's Constitutional Court will announce its verdict in the unprecedented impeachment trial of President Roh Moo-hyun later this week, a court spokesman said.

The ruling will decide whether to oust or reinstate Roh, who was impeached in a controversial parliamentary vote on March 12. The verdict will be broadcast live on national television 10 a.m. Friday (8 p.m. EDT Thursday), spokesman Chun Jong-ik said on Tuesday.

Six of the nine-member

Constitutional Court must uphold the impeachment vote for it to stand.

The opposition-dominated National Assembly impeached Roh on charges of illegal electioneering and incompetence. His powers have since been suspended, with Prime Minister Goh Kun serving as acting president.

If the court rules against the impeachment, Roh regains his executive powers. If the impeachment is upheld, the nation will hold a new presidential election within 60 days.

South Korean news media have reported that the Constitutional Court had decided how to rule last Friday, and that judges were fine-tuning their verdict.

The Hankyoreh newspaper reported on Tuesday that the judges have been discussing whether the verdict should include minority opinions. Given the sensitive nature of the trial, the judges have decided not to reveal the number and names of judges who voiced minority opinions, it said.

Roh was the first South Korean president impeached by

the parliament.

There's been growing speculation that Roh will be cleared of all allegations of wrongdoing.

Public debate over his case has cooled since large street protests erupted over the parliamentary impeachment vote. Opposition parties were dealt a crushing defeat at April 15 nationwide National Assembly elections, largely seen as a backlash against their impeachment move. Voters handed a National Assembly majority to the small Uri Party, which supports Roh.

Exiled Pakistan leader goes home, is deported

LAHORE, Pakistan (AP)—Exiled opposition leader Shahbaz Sharif flew into the eastern Pakistani city of Lahore on Tuesday, but the government immediately deported him amid an intense crackdown that has seen hundreds of his supporters arrested.

A Pakistan International Airlines plane carrying Sharif was en route to Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, Information Minister Sheikh Rashid Ahmed told The Associated Press.

The plane took off from Lahore's airport just 90 minutes

after Sharif arrived to face murder charges, following more than three years in exile.

Sharif's brother, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, was toppled by President Gen. Pervez Musharraf in a bloodless coup in 1999. Musharraf has consolidated control since then, winning election as president in a referendum in which he was the only candidate.

The government has said the Sharif family was exiled to Saudi

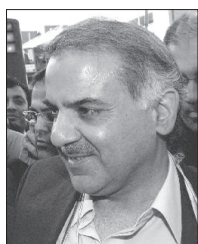
Arabia in 2000 for 10 years in a deal struck after Nawaz Sharif was convicted of trying to assassinate Musharraf as the coup unfolded. But the Supreme Court has said Shahbaz Sharif, who has been in London since a medical check-up there last year, has the right to return.

Authorities barricaded roads and detained more than 1,100 members of Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-N party across Punjab province ahead of his ar-

rival "to prevent them from going to the Lahore airport to welcome Shahbaz Sharif," party spokesman Binyamin Rizvi said.

PML-N chairman Raja Zafarul Haq said Sharif's deportation was "highly condemnable" and "an insult to democracy."

Shahbaz Sharif faces murder charges in the 1998 killings of five men in Lahore. Their families claim he ordered police to fire on them when he was Punjab's chief minister. It wasn't clear if the charges would allow police to jail him when he stepped off the plane.



Sharif

World

Memo: Iraq abuse was 'vigilante justice'

By JIM KRANE
AP WRITER

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP)—A female Army soldier in the notorious 320th Military Police Battalion meted out "vigilante justice" on Iraqi prisoners she believed had raped former POW Jessica Lynch, according to a letter from her battalion commander obtained by The Associated Press.

Lt. Col. Jerry L. Phillabaum, the troubled battalion's commander, leveled the allegation in a rebuttal to charges against his leadership of the 320th, some of whose soldiers were charged with abusing prisoners last fall at the Abu Ghraib prison west of Baghdad.

The soldier Phillabaum named, then-Master Sgt. Lisa Girman, 35, called her former commander's description of the incident "completely false"

and said Phillabaum was an "incompetent" leader trying to cover up his shortcomings by blaming others.

"It's funny how the leadership continues to point downward," said Girman, a Pennsylvania State Trooper in civilian life. "That night there was no abuse, there was no evidence of abuse."

In an April 12 memo to Lt. Gen. Thomas Metz, deputy commander of coalition forces in Iraq, Phillabaum said the soldiers abused the prisoners without the knowledge or encouragement of battalion commanders. Phillabaum gave a copy of the memo to AP.

Phillabaum said Girman and three other MPs from the battalion abused the prisoners after transporting them to Camp Bucca in southern Iraq on May 12, 2003.

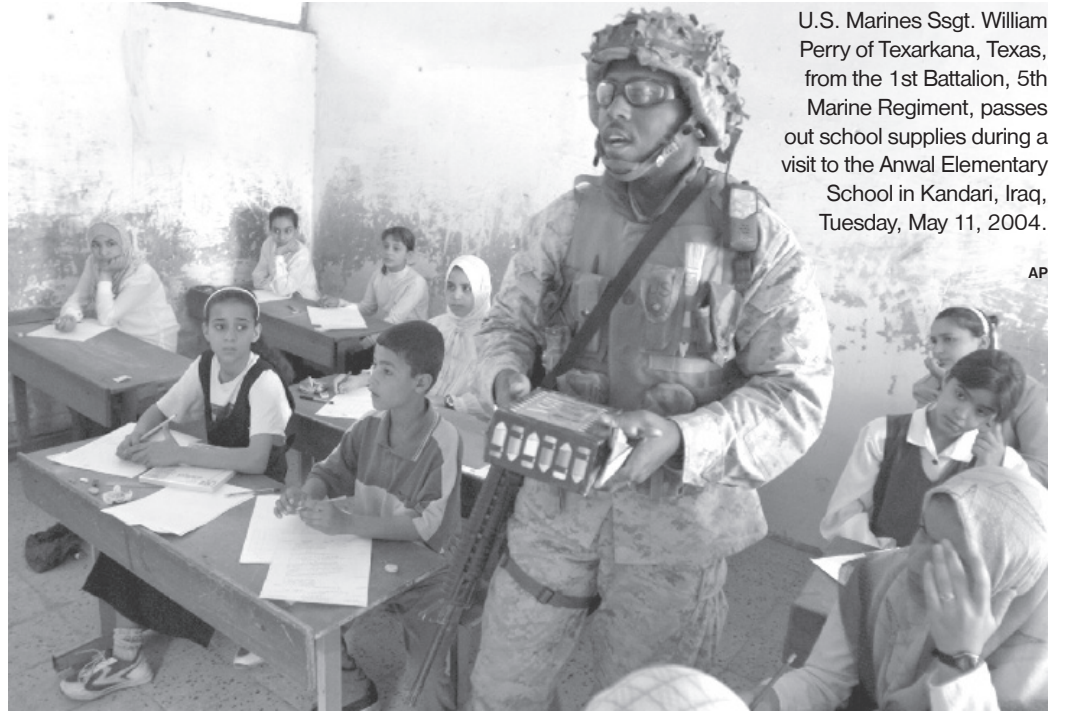
"When Master Sgt. Lisa Girman returned to Camp Bucca

shortly before midnight, she took vigilante justice against EPW (enemy prisoners of war) that she believed had raped Pfc. Jessica Lynch," Phillabaum wrote.

"Four out of the 10 320th MP Battalion soldiers abused some of the EPWs; a clear indication that the abuse was the responsibility of those individuals acting alone and was not condoned by myself or any leader at Camp Bucca."

On Tuesday, Girman said that, at the time of the incident, she did not know who the prisoners were or whether they had any connection with Lynch, a supply clerk who was wounded and captured by Iraqi forces in the opening days of the war and then rescued from an Iraqi hospital in April 2003.

According to medical records cited in her biography, Lynch also was sodomized, apparently during a three-hour



U.S. Marines Ssgt. William Perry of Texarkana, Texas, from the 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, passes out school supplies during a visit to the Anwal Elementary School in Kandari, Iraq, Tuesday, May 11, 2004.

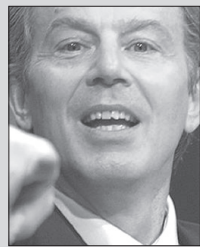
AP

Blair rejects call for Iraq investigation

LONDON (AP)—Prime Minister Tony Blair's office Tuesday rejected calls for an independent investigation of allegations that British soldiers shot and killed Iraqi civilians, including an 8-year-old girl, in situations where the troops were under no apparent threat.

Blair's official spokesman said the Royal Military Police's Special Investigations Branch already was looking into the claims by Amnesty International.

The human rights group's report said the military had failed to investigate many cases in which British soldiers killed civilians in Iraq, and that the inquiries they did under-



Blair

take were too secretive.

Kate Allen, the director of Amnesty International U.K., urged independent inquiries into each of the 37 cases the organization had raised. Of those, 18 are being investigated, she said.

"This really isn't independent or adequate enough," she told British Broadcasting Corp. radio Tuesday.

Blair's official spokesman, however, said the Ministry of Defense was "already aware" of all the cases raised by Amnesty International, "and they have been addressed by the military."

"That means they are under investigation or have been in-

vestigated. The Special Investigations Branch have a long track record of investigating cases and allegations made against British troops. They have a long track record of establishing the truth in such matters," Blair's spokesman said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

The Ministry of Defense told The Associated Press that it would comment after it had examined the allegations in detail.

Amnesty also reported that armed groups and individuals had killed dozens or possibly hundreds of civilians in British-controlled southern Iraq, and many people were afraid to even discuss the killings. It said Iraqis had little confidence that the British military or Iraqi police could protect them.

US, tribunal disagree on Saddam handoff

KUWAIT CITY, Kuwait (AP)—The head of Iraq's war-crimes tribunal said Tuesday that the United States has pledged to hand over Saddam Hussein and about 100 other suspects to Iraqi authorities before July 1 if Iraq is ready to take them into custody. U.S. officials denied any decision had been reached.

"The coalition will hand them over if we are able to hold them in custody," Salem Chalabi told The Associated Press.

Chalabi said trials would likely begin early next year—again, "if we are ready"—and that judges would receive "files" on the suspects at the end of this year.

He earlier told local reporters that Saddam would definitely be handed over before July 1, when Iraq assumes sovereignty

from its U.S.-led occupiers, and that trials would begin early next year.

"We will put 100 people ... including Saddam Hussein, on trial," he told the reporters. The suspects, he added, "will be delivered to us by the coalition before the transfer of power."

U.S. officials, who are holding Saddam in an undisclosed location, disputed the report. Secretary of State Colin Powell said he knew nothing about handing over Saddam.

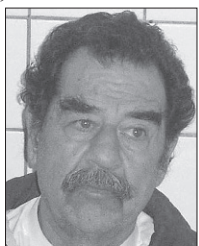
State Department spokesman Richard Boucher also said that he knew of no decision on when or in what time frame the coalition would hand over the ousted Iraqi leader, in U.S. custody

since he was captured Dec. 13.

A Defense Department official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said the U.S. intention remains to have Saddam tried by the Iraqi people.

Chalabi said the suspects to be handed over include Ali Hassan al-Majid, known as "Chemical Ali" for his use of chemical weapons against the Kurds in the 1980s. Chalabi has said al-Majid could be one of the first to stand trial.

Tariq Aziz, Saddam's former deputy prime minister, also will be handed over, he said. Aziz is in U.S. custody but is not on the U.S. "most-wanted" list; it was unclear what charges he might face.



Hussein

CDA

Hamas displays Israeli soldiers' remains

By IBRAHIM BARZAK
AP WRITER

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip (AP)—Hamas militants triumphantly displayed remains of some of the six Israeli soldiers killed in a roadside bombing in Gaza City on Tuesday, prompting Israeli threats of punishing reprisals if body parts are not returned.

Eight Palestinians were killed and 123 wounded in a battle that pitted hundreds of gunmen against Israeli troops firing from tanks, helicopters and rooftops.

The violence began after midnight, when a small Israeli force entered the crowded Zeitoun neighborhood to look

for weapons workshops.

As the troops withdrew around daybreak, an armored personnel carrier transporting at least 220 pounds of explosives for use in the raid was shredded by the roadside bomb.

Through the day and into the night, hundreds of troops searched Zeitoun for the remains of their comrades, which were scattered across a 300-yard radius.

"We are checking every roof and every balcony in order to locate the remnants of the armored personnel carrier and the bodies of our soldiers," army Maj. Gen. Dan Harel said.

Israeli security sources said the search could take days, cre-

ating an unprecedented situation in which many Israeli troops would remain in Gaza City—a militant stronghold—for an extended period. Israeli soldiers have raided Gaza neighborhoods before but usually withdrew after a few hours.

Al-Jazeera, an Arabic-language TV channel, broadcast a video it said showed two masked Islamic Jihad activists taking responsibility and displaying what they said was the head of an Israeli soldier on a table in front of them. Israel TV carried the footage but electronically obscured the head.

"We are not conducting any negotiations," Israeli military commander Lt. Gen. Moshe

Yaalon said. "We will show no forgiveness toward those who are responsible for (what happened to) the bodies."

Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat convened his security council in the West Bank city of Ramallah and issued a statement saying the Palestinian Authority was in touch with "our brothers in Gaza" to solve the problem of the body parts "according to religious and humanitarian traditions."

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon called an emergency session of his Security Cabinet, and participants decided not to negotiate with militant groups for the return of bodies and to continue searching for body parts, officials said.

Before the meeting, Sharon, Defense Minister Shaul Mofaz and military commanders agreed on a series of pinpoint military actions, the officials said. Army commanders recommended against targeting Arafat, security sources said.

Sharon told parliament that Israel would strike back hard.

"We will not stop fighting him (the enemy) and hitting him, wherever he operates and hides," he said.

Palestinian Foreign Minister Nabil Shaath, meanwhile, said President Bush has written to the Palestinian Authority, affirming his commitment to the "road map" peace plan and the creation of a Palestinian state.

Bush wrote that disputed issues must be resolved by the parties, said Shaath, who will meet with Secretary of State Colin Powell in Jordan this weekend.

The Bush letter appeared aimed at easing tensions with the Arab world over assurances the president gave to Sharon last month, including a declaration that Israel would not have to absorb Palestinian refugees or withdraw from all the West Bank.

Powell called the Israeli foreign minister on Tuesday, said State Department spokesman Richard Boucher, who added that "we are very concerned and shocked" about the reports from Gaza.



AP
Firefighters carry a casualty from the rubble of a plastics factory in the West End of Glasgow, Tuesday May 11, 2004, where four people were confirmed dead and 37 injured dead after a massive explosion. A Strathclyde Police spokesman said at least 11 people people were unaccounted for after the blast.

Red Cross faces pressure in abuse scandal

GENEVA (AP)—The international Red Cross has been buffeted by demands that it drop its policy of confidentiality in dealing with prisoners in Iraq but says its quiet approach is the best protection for victims of war.

"We're getting private e-mails. We're getting comment from journalists. We're seeing reports in media around the world," Antonella Notari, chief spokeswoman of the International Committee of the Red Cross, said of the response to the publication of

its confidential report on abuse at U.S.-run prisons in Iraq.

The report indicated the abuse went on for more than a year during which the Red Cross repeatedly complained in private, raising the question of whether the agency could have been more effective had it gone public with its findings.

Notari said making violations of international humanitarian law public doesn't necessarily change the situation on the ground. She noted public criticism failed to halt atrocities

during the Balkan wars of the 1990s or to prevent the Rwandan genocide in 1994.

"One organization—and that is us—must be able to continue working to address the issues on the spot with the people who are directly affected and with the people who are in charge of their situation and try to work on it in a pragmatic way there and then," she said.

"Our way of working does have an effect, but it doesn't always immediately have an effect," Notari told The Associated Press.

The Red Cross report, published in the Wall Street Journal, was a summary of its various attempts in person and in writing from March to November 2003 to get U.S. officials to stop abuses.

Those earlier interventions by the Red Cross far preceded the Pentagon's decision to investigate after a low-ranking U.S. soldier stepped forward in January.

The Red Cross said it wanted to keep the report confidential because it saw U.S. officials making progress in responding to their complaints.

Cuba is stunned as dollar-only stores close

HAVANA (AP)—Cuba's dollar-only stores displayed "closed for inventory" signs Tuesday after the communist government suddenly shut them down, blaming new U.S. measures aimed at squeezing the island's economy.

Long lines stretched from state stores with food and personal hygiene products—nearly the only items still sold to Cubans in dollars—as people scrambled to buy shampoo and soap from

rapidly emptying shelves.

"This is insanity," said 64-year-old Odila Morales, waiting to buy laundry detergent. "Politics are filthy."

The government did not say whether the stores would reopen. But Julio Perez, the administrator of Harris Brothers department store, said they were merely giving dollar-only stores time to mark up the prices of all their goods.

"It really isn't anything seri-

ous," said Perez. "Maybe it will only be three, four, five days."

Some questioned how the closure—which prevents Cubans from spending dollars at the government stores—would counteract the U.S. proposals announced last week, which aim to reduce hard currency on the island by limiting how often Cuban-Americans can visit relatives, decreasing how much they can spend, and prohibiting money

transfers to Cuban officials and Communist Party members.

"It's not helping the Cuban people, and it's not helping the Cuban government," said Carmelo Mesa-Lago, an expert on the Cuban economy at the University of Pittsburgh. "All this is bad—bad economics, bad social welfare."

Mesa-Lago said the measures could strengthen the Cuban government's control over the economy.

Mexican Air Force pilots film 11 UFOs

MEXICO CITY (AP)—Mexican Air Force pilots filmed 11 unidentified flying objects in the skies over southern Campeche state, a Defense Department spokesman confirmed Tuesday.

A videotape made widely available to the news media on Tuesday shows the bright objects, some sharp points of light and others like large headlights, moving rapidly in what appears to be a late-evening sky.

The lights were filmed on March 5 by pilots using infrared equipment. They appeared to be flying at an altitude of about 3,500 meters (11,480 feet), and allegedly surrounded the Air Force jet as it conducted routine anti-drug trafficking vigilance in Campeche. Only three of the objects showed up on the plane's radar.

"Was I afraid? Yes. A little afraid because we were facing something that had never happened before," said radar operator Lt. German Marin in a taped interview made public Tuesday.

"I couldn't say what it was ... but I think they're completely real," added Lt. Mario Adrian Vazquez, the infrared equip-

ment operator. Vazquez insisted that there was no way to alter the recorded images.

The plane's captain, Maj. Magdaleno Castanon, said the military jets chased the lights "and I believe they could feel we were pursuing them."

When the jets stopped following the objects, they disappeared, he said.

A Defense Department spokesman confirmed Tuesday that the videotape was filmed by members of the Mexican Air Force. The spokesman declined to comment further and spoke on customary condition of anonymity.

The video was first aired on national television Monday night then again at a news conference Tuesday by Jaime Maussan, a Mexican investigator who has dedicated the past 10 years to studying UFOs.

"This is historic news," Maussan told reporters. "Hundreds of videos (of UFOs) exist, but none had the backing of the armed forces of any country. ... The armed forces don't perpetuate frauds."

Don't throw flowers at Danish wedding

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP)—Throw your wishes and cheers at the royal couple as they ride through Copenhagen after Friday's wedding but don't hurl any flowers, police said Tuesday.

"A flower could be mistaken for a bomb and we don't want to cause any unnecessary scares," police spokesman Flemming Steen Munch told The Associated Press.

Police estimate that as many as 250,000 people will jam the Copenhagen city center and as many as 3,000 police officers—one-third of Denmark's police force—are expected to oversee security on Friday when Crown Prince Frederik and Australian Mary Donaldson are to be married.

After the ceremony, the couple

will travel through downtown in a horse-drawn carriage.

Officers will line up along the route through the city. Police also called on people not to try to run after the procession.

Although the terror threat against Denmark, a key U.S. ally in Iraq, is low, the wedding is surrounded by tight security.

Cars will be banned from downtown on Friday, the airspace over central Copenhagen will be closed and police will check everyone entering the city center with large bags, Munch said.

In mailed letters and on the Copenhagen police department's Web site, downtown residents have been asked to be vigilant and report anything suspicious. Police declined to say whether they had received any tips.

Life & Style

You've got mail. Ignore it.

By **BLAINE HARDEN**
THE WASHINGTON POST

"The pace of life feels morally dangerous to me," Richard Ford, the novelist, wrote six years ago.

It has only gotten worse since then, complains David M. Levy, a victim of information overload who is also a computer scientist at the University of Washington's Information School.

Levy is all but helpless, he says, when new e-mail arrives. He feels obliged to open it. He is similarly hooked on the news, images and nonsense that spill out of the Internet. He is also a receiver and sometimes a transmitter of "surfer's voice," the blathered prattling of someone on the phone while diddling around on the Web.

"We are living lives of Web fragments," he said. "We don't remember that it is part of our birthright as human beings to have space and silence for our thoughts."

Levy is fed up and starting Monday night—with the help of cardiologists, monks, storytellers, hypertext editors, Zen masters and a choir—he is doing something about it. He has organized a conference here called "Information, Silence and Sanctuary," which will diagnose and prescribe treatment for what is ailing Levy—and, in his view, most of the developed world.

Information-polluted people need to organize and protect psychic space and quiet time, Levy believes, much as environmentalists organized in the 1960s to protect wetlands and old-growth forests.

Then, there was DDT, which did a marvelous job of killing mosquitoes—and much else in the natural world.

Now, there are home media centers, multi-tasking devices that allow people to sit in their living rooms, watch television, burn CDs, surf the Web and instant message.

At the office, according to a Wall

Street Journal report on research carried out at the University of California at Irvine, workers flutter from spreadsheet to e-mail to Internet to phone about once every three minutes.

This week's conference seems likely to prescribe info-overload treatment that is similar to what Levy has prescribed for his own life.

"For me, one day a week is unplugged," said Levy, who has a doctorate in computer science from Stanford University and who, before moving to Seattle three years ago, was a researcher for 15 years at the Palo Alto Research Center. That is where researchers invented the personal computer, the mouse and much of the technology that Levy now frets about. "We had seen the future and it was us," he has written about his years there.

Because he is an observant Jew (and his wife is a rabbi), his unplugged day is the Sabbath. From sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday, Levy does not use e-mail, the Internet, the telephone or the television. Instead, there is candlelighting, a dinner with friends and services on Saturday morning.

Throughout the rest of his week, Levy, 53, steals shorter blocks of time. He meditates every morning before work and, if possible, skips lunch at the university to take aikido lessons. These breaks, he says, are not about playing hooky. They are work.

"Our best work requires time," he said. "It is not loosey-goosey, touchy-feely spiritualism to see the value in creating space in our lives for reflection."

While individuals have the primary responsibility for carving out time and space from the endless yowl of information, Levy says business and government should help, for the sake of higher-quality work and better citizenship. It would be helpful, he said, if the federal government required that



THE WASHINGTON POST

David M. Levy, a professor at the University of Washington's Information School in Seattle, tames his addiction to e-mail and the Internet by avoiding computers during the Sabbath and advises others to take 24-hour breaks.

everyone get at least some paid vacation, and if managers understood that time away from one's desk is essential to the bottom line.

"At the workplace, managers need to allow for value in things that don't look like work," Levy said. "Information is not enough. In a democratic society, if

you don't have time, or make time, to live with that information, to reflect on it, you will not have a deeply grounded opinion. You become numb."

Levy's three-day conference is being bankrolled by the MacArthur Foundation and the National Science Foundation. After the conference has

come and gone, he concedes that he will remain semi-addicted to information overload.

At sunset every Saturday, he lights a Havdalah candle, which symbolizes the separation of the Sabbath from the rest of the week. Then he races upstairs in his house to check his e-mail.

'Wicked,' 'Assassins' lead Tony nods

By **MICHAEL KUCHWARA**
AP DRAMA WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—It was a "Wicked" day, with the lavish "Wizard of Oz" musical nominated for 10 Tony Awards, Broadway's highest honor. "Assassins," the chilling Stephen Sondheim-John Weidman musical about presidential killers, followed with seven nominations Monday.

Two Pulitzer Prize winners squared off against each other for best play. Doug Wright's "I Am My Own Wife," which took the Pulitzer for drama this year, competes against "Anna in the Tropics," the 2003 winner. Also nominated were "The Retreat From

Moscow," William Nicholson's story of a crumbling marriage, and "Frozen," Bryony Lavery's harrowing tale of a child's abduction and murder.

Besides "Wicked," the other candidates for best musical: "Caroline, or Change," a look at the relationship between a black maid and her white employer's young son; "Avenue Q," a saucy little puppet show filled with songs and sex; and "The Boy From Oz," the Peter Allen musical biography starring Hugh Jackman as the Australian entertainer.

Jackman, who will serve as host for the Tony telecast on CBS June 6, is a strong favorite in the actor-musical category where he will face Alfred Molina, "Fiddler on the Roof"; Hunter Foster, "Little

Shop of Horrors"; Euan Morton, "Taboo"; and John Tartaglia, "Avenue Q."

The nominations were announced Monday from the stage of the Hudson Theatre, one of Broadway's oldest playhouses. Among the stars reading the nominations were Jane Krakowski, Edie Falco, John Leguizamo, Jerry Stiller and Anne Meara.

"Wicked," a \$14 million extravaganza about the witches of "Oz" before Dorothy arrives on the Yellow Brick Road, is the show to beat. The musical is the season's biggest success, grossing more than \$1 million each week.

"I can't complain with 10 nominations," David Stone, producer of "Wicked," said. "We are pretty well

sold out," with tickets on sale through the end of October.

Its leading ladies, Kristin Chenoweth and Idina Menzel, were both nominated, and the musical also picked up nominations for book, score, choreography, orchestrations, sets, costumes and lighting.

Competing against the "Wicked" witches for best actress in a musical are Donna Murphy for "Wonderful Town," Tonya Pinkins for "Caroline, or Change" and Stephanie D'Abruzzo, who sings and acts the roles of several puppets in "Avenue Q."

Kevin Kline and Christopher Plummer were nominated for their roles in two Shakespeare productions, "Henry IV"

and "King Lear," respectively. They face Simon Russell Beale, "Jumpers"; Frank Langella, "Match"; and Jefferson Mays, "I Am My Own Wife."

"This has been a labor of love and a joy to do," said Langella, describing the two-year journey of "Match" from its first readings to Broadway's Plymouth Theatre. In Stephen Belber's play, the actor plays a flamboyant choreographer Langella described as "a nonstop motor-mouth."

Not surprisingly, missing from that strong lineup is Sean Combs, who made a highly publicized if critically dismissive Broadway debut in a revival of "A Raisin in the Sun," Lorraine Hansberry's landmark drama.

‘Sopranos’ star to appear on ‘Joey’

By FRAZIER MOORE
AP TELEVISION WRITER

NEW YORK (AP)—As every fan of “The Sopranos” knows, Adriana LaCerva is living on borrowed time. A while back the sexy mafia moll made the wrong friend—an undercover FBI agent—and has since been forced to squeal to the feds about Tony Soprano’s gangster family.

Since then the hit drama, in its fifth season on HBO (Sundays at 9 p.m. EDT), has found Adriana racked by conflict and guilt.

“What am I doing?” she moaned to her FBI contact. “I’m being ripped apart here, snitching on people.”

Worse: She knows if Tony discovers she’s ratting him out, who cares if she’s the fiancée of his beloved nephew, Christopher? Adriana’s gonna disappear real quick.

But even in the best-case scenario, Ade, along with the series, will be history after next season’s slate of 10 episodes (whenever that is, given the show’s propensity for long breaks).

In March this fact was bummering out Drea de Matteo, the actress who has made an art form out of whining “Chris-tuh-fuhr.” She peered beyond “The Sopranos” and fretted, “There’s not really much money for me to make in the film business.”

At that interview, she looked very unlike Adriana in jeans and baggy sweater, and—in stark contrast to Adriana’s flashy manicures—with nails free of polish and clipped short as a child’s.

“The kind of projects I like,” de Matteo went on, “they’re not moneymaking projects.”

Maybe another TV series? “I’ve been on the best television show, so to go anywhere beneath that wouldn’t feel right to do right now.”

Even if it were a high-profile sitcom? “Not yet,” she declared.

How things change. Next week, when NBC unveils its fall schedule for advertisers at its gala “upfront” presentation, de Matteo will be on hand as a late addition to the cast of perhaps next season’s highest-profile new sitcom: the “Friends” spinoff “Joey.” She’ll be on display right beside its star, former Friend Matt LeBlanc.

After the media siege triggered by last week’s “Friends” finale, many viewers had no trouble relating to the California construction worker whose brain was pierced by nails fired from a high-powered nail gun.

Fortunately, he survived. So shall we. And, who knows, “Joey” (which inherits the Thursday-at-8 time slot of its celebrated forebear) could turn out to be lots of fun.

Anyway, de Matteo is psyched about her new gig, as she made clear during a follow-up phone call last week.



AP

The cast of NBC’s new series “Joey” poses in this undated publicity photo. Shown from left are Paulo Costanzo as Michael, Drea deMatteo as Gina Tribbiani, Matt LeBlanc as Joey Tribbiani and Ashley Scott as Allison. deMatteo has been cast on the “Friends” spinoff, perhaps next season’s highest-profile new sitcom.

“It was very, very unexpected,” she said. “I never even had the chance to think about it.”

She will co-star as the older sister of dimwitted would-be

actor Joey Tribbiani, who, post-“Friends,” moves to L.A. to further his career—and moves in with her.

“I play a hairdresser—or

should I say ‘hah-uhrdressuh’?” de Matteo laughed. “My character is very similar in look and accent to Adriana, but sharper and tougher.”

Ellen aims to give ‘a sense of fun’

By KATHY BLUMENSTOCK
THE WASHINGTON POST

Whether she’s freak dancing with John Travolta, shooting hoops with Britney Spears, or watching Jim Carrey pop a wheelie on a replica of his green childhood bike, Ellen DeGeneres is having fun on her daytime talk show—and hopes viewers are too.

“It’s a very important thing to get a sense of fun when watching TV, not a sense of doom,” she said. “I wanted to do a light, entertaining show where you know that you will feel good at the end of it.”

DeGeneres and the staff of “The Ellen DeGeneres Show,” which airs weekdays, are feeling especially good these days: The show racked up 12 daytime Emmy nominations, the most ever for a freshman talk show. Emmy winners will be announced on Friday at 9 p.m. on NBC.

“I didn’t really understand what a big deal it was,” DeGeneres said. “They told me, you got nominations for every single category except the song, and I instantly said, ‘What’s wrong with our song?’”

“But we’re up against the soaps, and they have original songs every week. It’s really just nice that I am surrounded by such good people. The show is a well-oiled machine and I could not have done this alone. I’m just so happy everyone is being acknowledged,” she said.

The show, airing in 219 markets and recently renewed for another season, features celebrity guests, a monologue and segments that lean on viewer participation, from dance tips to “Fat Cats” to the new “Holla Awards.”

“That’s a shout out, or holla, to recognize something nice that someone has done,” she said. “I really want to encourage random acts of kindness, and when people write in to tell about something, we need to show a dramatization of what happened.”

In one example, a college student helped another who had dropped her lunch tray in the cafeteria. A friend of the good Samaritan wrote to Ellen, and the re-enactment included the note being written as well as cafeteria footage, complete with spilled food, embarrassed student and jeering classmates. “It’s a little corny, but it’s fun,” she said.



DeGeneres

In “Fat Cats,” DeGeneres displays photos of enormous felines. Earlier this season, she had talked on the air about taking her own cat to the vet.

“The vet said he was too fat. He weighed 14 pounds—he’s a big cat,” she said. “So then we started getting all these pictures people sent in of their own fat cats,” she said. “There are some huge cats out there. [Viewers]

love it and can relate.”

Other viewer-participation segments include “Why Aren’t You on TV?” and a seemingly endless stream of video dance tips for DeGeneres, who bops and shimmies her way to the interview sofa.

The audience dances along to the beat and now, DeGeneres said, “as much as I’d like to stop, I just can’t. I can feel how much the audience loves it. But I know I am a parody waiting to happen on ‘Saturday Night Live.’”

DeGeneres, who began her career doing stand-up comedy and has starred in several sitcoms, said initially she did not have “a vision for this show other than that it should be as real as possible, and incorporate real people into it, not just celebrities.”

“This show is really all hands-on and it is also just being ‘on’ every day; it’s the energy.”

“And just when you want to just stop, there’s another one (show) to do,” she said. “I have compared it to what it’s like to be a new mother. It has to be the most exhausting thing when the baby cries. This show is a crying baby that I don’t mind holding and rocking.”

wallace

CBS to air soldier video diary on prison

NEW YORK (AP)—A video that shows a young American soldier saying “who cares?” about Iraqi prisoners who died will air on “60 Minutes II.”

The CBS newsmagazine (8 p.m. EDT Wednesday) obtained the video diary of a soldier, whose name was

withheld, talking about conditions at Camp Bucca and Abu Ghraib in Iraq, where Iraqi prisoners were held.

It was “60 Minutes II” that first aired pictures two weeks ago of prisoners allegedly being abused at Abu Ghraib, igniting a political tempest.

“We’ve already had two prisoners die ... but who cares?” the soldier says on the tape. “That’s two less for me to worry about.”

The tape reflects the soldier’s dislike for the prison camp and the prisoners, according to CBS.

“I hate it here,” she says. “I

want to come home. I want to be a civilian again. We actually shot two prisoners today. One got shot in the chest for swinging a pole against our people on the feed team. One got shot in the arm. We don’t know if the one we shot in the chest is dead yet.”

Grammer: Kelsey Frasier character could return

NEW YORK (AP)—Kelsey Grammer isn’t shutting the door on the idea of bringing back his long-running character, Frasier Crane, on another television series.

Grammer said he had discussed the idea with Paramount, the company that produces “Frasier,” but there have been no definite plans.

“It may be a possibility at some point,” Grammer told The Associated Press on Tuesday. “I’m not closed to the possibility. It would have to be really good.”

Grammer said he’d like some time off from the character, holding off any possible return until “when the television landscape is appropriately bleak.”

The 11-year run of the NBC comedy ends with Thursday’s finale.

Including his stint on “Cheers,” Grammer has portrayed the pompous psychiatrist for a full 20 years on network television. That ties James Arness of “Gunsmoke” for the longest stretch an actor has played a single character in prime time.

A Paramount executive declined to comment Tuesday on the possibility of the character returning in some fashion.

“The idea of him going on with the character is totally plausible,” said actor David Hyde Pierce, who has played Frasier’s brother, Niles. “I don’t feel at the end of the series that he’d exhausted all he could do with the character. I think it’s a great idea.”

Pierce said no one has asked him about continuing and—given the way the series ends on Thursday—he’s not sure whether another series would have room for him.

“Frasier” gets a one-hour send-off on Thursday, one week after some 52 million people watched the last episode of “Friends” on NBC.

Ratings for “Frasier,” a five-time Emmy winner for best comedy, have faded over the past few years but improved recently with the approach of the finale.

Simpson to tour this summer



NEW YORK (AP)—As if she weren’t everywhere already, Jessica Simpson is coming to a concert venue near you. The pop music and reality television star announced a summer tour Tuesday, starting June 4 in New Orleans.

“The Jessica Simpson Reality Tour” will feature stops across the country, including New York, Chicago and her hometown of Dallas, and end Aug. 1 in Paso Robles, Calif.

This will be the 23-year-old’s first tour since the success of her MTV series “Newlyweds: Nick & Jessica,” with her husband, Nick Lachey. Her album, “In This Skin,” is in the Billboard Top 20. She recently shot a sitcom pilot for ABC and has a line of fragrances and beauty products called “Dessert.”

Pop singer Jessica Simpson, poses in New York in this April 23, 2004, file photo.

AP

Oprah’s trainer stands by McDonald’s

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (AP)—The fitness guru who trimmed Oprah Winfrey and is riding his bicycle across the country to promote health and wellness is sticking up for his sponsor, McDonald’s.

Bob Greene is biking 3,000 miles over 36 days as part of the fast food restaurant’s “Go Active!” challenge. Greene said that those who criticize McDonald’s—like Morgan Spurlock, director of the new documentary “Super Size Me”—are just taking cheap shots at the restaurant.

“It’s the movie coming out or lawyers,” Greene said Monday during a rest stop in a McDonald’s parking lot, alluding to a pair of class-action lawsuits the restaurant chain faced accusing it of making consumers fat. The



Bob Greene, Oprah Winfrey’s personal trainer, rides his bicycle into a Little Rock, Ark., McDonald’s, after riding 65 miles into town from Arkadelphia, Monday, May 10, 2004.

AP

U.S. House voted in March to ban class such lawsuits.

“Those things just don’t have teeth,” Greene said.

Greene said McDonald’s is spending money to promote fitness and healthy menu items, like salads.

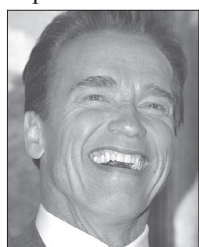
Schwarzenegger invited to Taiwan

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP)—Taiwan hoped to inject some star power into its May 20 presidential inauguration by inviting terminator-turned-California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, but he was too busy to come, an official said Tuesday.

Schwarzenegger’s invitation attracted the most attention when the Presidential Office

released the list of 400 foreign guests who’ve been asked to attend President Chen Shui-bian’s inauguration. Most of the visitors are heads of state or diplomats.

“There is a superstar who really wanted to come, but he cannot come because of his official business,” presidential spokesman James Huang told reporters.



Schwarzenegger

“They don’t need to be doing that,” he said. “They’re taking it to another level.”

Spurlock’s movie opened last weekend. In it, he chows down on a McDonald’s-only diet for a month in an examination of American obesity.

“That is the governor of California, the terminator, Arnold Schwarzenegger,” Huang said, adding a bit of showmanship to a routine news conference.

Instead, Schwarzenegger will send his lieutenant governor, Cruz Bustamante, Huang said. The governor, famous for starring in “Conan the Barbarian” and the “Terminator” movies, sent a congratulatory message to Chen after he was re-elected March 20, Huang said.

Mom cut cord to her son for each daughter-in-law

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN

DEAR ABBY: I just finished reading the letter from “Sick of the Bad Rep,” who is depressed at the thought of having three daughters-in-law when her three sons marry. Well, I have eight daughters-in-law, and I, too, was scared. Yes, mothers-in-law do get a bad rep—and often it is well-deserved.

When my eldest son married, I knew it was time to cut the cord. So, I cut the strings off a thoroughly worn apron—a visible sign of my intentions—and washed, starched, ironed and placed them in a gift box, and gave it to my new daughter-in-law. She was thrilled and let me know it.

I now have seven more daughters-in-law, and they are all precious to me. One after another, they have told me how much they appreciated the manner in which they were welcomed into the family, and my ability to let go.

I agree with you, Abby, that “Bad Rep’s” attitude is self-fulfilling. If she has done a good job rearing her sons, she has nothing to fear. Love is not divided; it is multiplied. Her sons’ wives will bless her, and she’ll have three precious daughters.

ONE WHO KNOWS

DEAR ONE WHO KNOWS: I have received a bushel of letters echoing your sentiments—but yours was by far the most original way of demonstrating to your daughters-in-law there would be no competition. Read on:

DEAR ABBY: It isn’t just straight couples who have that dilemma. I’m a 48-year-old gay man. Twenty-five years ago I was in my first cohabiting relationship, with “Boyd.” His mother made Joan Crawford look like June Allison. Boyd had been married and divorced years before we met. His father was very pleasant. Boyd and I shared a room when we visited their home. The first time we stayed there, I noticed there were pictures of his wedding everywhere. When his sisters came to meet me, one of them asked why the wedding pictures were out. The four of us had a good laugh.

I am a fastidious housekeeper. The first time Boyd’s parents visited us, I cleaned the house from top to bottom. One morning I got up to start breakfast and found his mom cleaning the sliding glass patio doors. I bit my tongue. As I handed her a cup of coffee, she said the sun looked so pretty coming through the doors, but the streaks on the glass had ruined the view. I wanted to slap her, but I hung onto my cool.

When people complain about their mothers-in-law I often share my stories. My point is, a woman can be a bad mother-in-law, be it to her son’s wife—or husband.

OVER THE RAINBOW, HARRISBURG, PA.

DEAR OVER RAINBOW: I’m sorry your mother-in-law turned out to be the Wicked Witch of the West instead of Glenda. I have a mountain of letters from readers who respect, admire and love their mothers-in-law. They enjoy relationships straight out of the Book of Ruth, which, by the way, contains one of the most beautiful love poems ever written—spoken by Ruth to her mother-in-law, Naomi:

“Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.

“Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me.” (Ruth 1:16-17)

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

For everything you need to know about wedding planning, order “How to Have a Lovely Wedding.” Send a business-size, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for \$5 (U.S. funds only) to: Dear Abby, Wedding Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included.)

